

STEPS FOR DESIGNING A KINGDOM CHARTER

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1. Paint some of the current scrolls to become familiar with how the various sizes of space paint and how long different charters take to paint. Large spaces make it difficult to get the paint even without streaks. Very small spaces can be hard to paint neatly. Large black areas may not copy well.
2. Contact the Star Signet to find out what types of charter are needed. It is nice to have a variety of scrolls from differing periods and styles, so that the painters can have a variety of designs to paint.
3. Get a copy of the scroll texts and note the size requirements of the scrolls. Size changes as the level of award goes up. Texts are standardized, except for Lions, which are persona specific originals.
4. Study period illuminations and calligraphy to get ideas for your design. Be sure that you match the style of calligraphy to the style of illumination. Find examples of pages showing both together. The type of design you want to use will influence whether you design your scroll with the long edge of the paper up (landscape) or the short side of the paper up (portrait).
5. Keep the amount of illumination small on lower level scrolls; you can get fancier with grant level scrolls. A suggestion: for non-armigerous use only the upper left corner; for AoA level use one border (top or left); for Grant level use two borders (top & left, left & bottom, or left & right if it is laid out landscape. I suppose top & bottom would work if it is in a portrait layout.)
6. Do a preliminary layout of the illumination and calligraphy. The design may be planned around either one. I usually do the illumination first. I like to use a smooth heavy paper for my layouts, such as Bristol board. Start by marking a rectangle the size of the scroll centered toward one end of an 11 X 17 inch sheet. The extra space at the end will be for the instructions to the painters. In pencil, mark a 1 inch margin within the rectangle. This leaves room for framing.
7. You can do the various elements of your design on different sheets of paper and move them around to see what looks best. Parts may be resized with a photo copier. Leave plenty of room in the calligraphy for the scribe to fill in the blanks. I can usually rig it so that the group's name and the recipient's name are on blank lines, which gives the scribe who fills them in lots of room.

8. Once the design is finalized carefully ink in the artwork. There are lots of pens available now for drafting work. Because we use photocopied scrolls, you can cut and paste your master copies. One trick I use is to cut and paste the design, then, when I have the design and calligraphy layout finalized, I will do a final copy on a light table. Small problems may be corrected with whiteout, but keep the master as neat and clean as possible. Don't make copies off copies; the artwork will get less sharp each time it is copied.

9. In the leftover space make instructions for the artist. I like to include: the basic blurb on how to paint with gouache, the colors of the original on which I based my design, a book and page number where a color copy of the original may be found, coloring chart if a badge is in the design, name of the scroll designer and/or calligrapher.

10. Have different people proofread and look for problems with the artwork. You would be surprised at how hard it can be to find mistakes if the same people are looking at it.

11. Make a photocopy of your finished master. This will often show problems in lining up the calligraphy or areas in the illumination that need to be cleaned up. Another way to find problems is to paint a copy. This will often show where you didn't completely close off an area or other problems with the artwork

12. Make master copies of your original artwork. I usually keep the original artwork and give about a dozen copies directly from the master to the Star Signet, who can then distribute copies of the masters and blank charters ready to paint.